

In Illinois there has been going on for some time a discussion of the aggravated evil of dividing fees between the surgeon operating upon the patient and the physician referring the patient to the surgeon. The evil exists, doubtless, everywhere; it is a contemptible and a dishonest practice. But is it not a question of whether one can legislate honesty into the individual? Here in our own state there are many well known surgeons of whom it is commonly understood that they will give a large portion of the fee charged for an operation, to the physician who sends the patient to them. They have cultivated agents, as it were, in many towns and counties and these agents know that their "commission" will be paid promptly. The judgment of one who will accept this "commission" must certainly be warped by the warm glow that cometh from the dollars to be received; he can not refer a patient to the patient's best advantage, for he is afflicted with monetary mental astigmatism. The patient is wronged for he is being deceived and deceit is about the most detestable of all forms of petty crime. The surgeon is prostituting a noble and a liberal profession to pure commercialism. These things are admitted by every honest man, and the fact that the very men who participate in the under-hand transaction "keep it dark," is conclusive evidence that they, in their hearts, also admit the dishonesty of it. Who that is guilty of the practice has sufficient real belief in the honesty of his deeds to come out openly and acknowledge that he is "splitting fees"? Is there a single one? If so he has not yet been heard from! If the physician wishes to do so, and he not only can but should, let him charge his fee for being with his patient and assisting at the operation; but let the patient know exactly what he is being charged, and what for. Is there not some way in which the shame of this vulgar transaction of "splitting fees" can be brought home to those who are guilty and the dishonest practice stopped or checked?

It is most singular how, under the operation of either the Federal Pure Food and Drug Law, or the various state pure food and drug laws, the statements in regard to drugs or medicinal preparations will change. A case in point is furnished by the Parker Chemical Co., which puts out a certain something called "diozo." A "diozo" circular of the unregenerate days says "Diozo kills germs in three minutes"; "Diozo is a solid germicide (not a liquid)." It was—and may be is—supplied in a paper carton with instructions to "hang it up; that's all" and then presumably some subtle thing emanates from the package and kills germs thus furnishing "health insurance at a cost of less than one cent a week." Again we read that "Diozo is superior to all liquid disinfectants because it evaporates slowly, and cannot spill." But now stepped in the State Hygienic Laboratory which, most impertinently, asked some questions. The solid cake, when tested, did not seem to do much of anything and even a

solution of it "failed to kill bacteria in thirty minutes." Alas! alas, for the "health insurance at less than one cent a week." But is the company stumped? Not at all. They changed the formula and advised the laboratory that they were getting up a new carton with new directions, to wit, "to crush the cake into powder and dissolve it in one gallon of water, allowing it to stand for 24 hours and then use the liquid as a disinfectant." What has become of the superior advantage of a *solid* over a *liquid* article? But "it has not been our intention to deceive the public in regard to 'diozo'"; certainly not, no nostrum faker ever wanted to deceive the dear public; of course not; the idea is preposterous. They were just mistaken and carried away with benevolent enthusiasm; when they really investigate their wonderful product they "find that in order to really kill germs the atmosphere of the room would have to be saturated to such an extent with disinfecting gases that it would be also deadly to human beings,—therefore we are now preparing new circulars reducing our claims as to the disinfecting properties of the vapors produced by the cabinet." How singular this change of attitude when only a few short weeks ago the concern stated in its circular "The diozo disinfectant is the most powerful known to science. It kills deadly disease germs, yet its vapors may be inhaled without harm and are even beneficial in cases of infection." It is heartrending to see people with no "intention to deceive the public," and with such overwhelming philanthropy, falling into these trifling errors of fact, doubtless carried away by their own enthusiasm in the cause of poor, suffering humanity. Alas!

The Nurses' Association of San Francisco County has had, for some time, a Central Directory through which nurses are furnished at a moment's notice. It is a very useful part of their organization; useful to them and useful to physicians as well, for no nurses are members of the Association unless they have graduated from a good and reputable institution and are in every way in good standing. It certainly should be up to the State Medical Society to encourage, in every way possible, the betterment of nursing and the perfecting of the nurses' organization. For this reason the JOURNAL again bespeaks your aid in helping the Nurses' Association and its Directory. Nurses are sent from the Directory not alone to patients in San Francisco, but to any portion of the state. In order to aid you in remembering to make use of the Central Directory, and that you may have a constant reminder of it and its whereabouts, you will find on the last cover page of the JOURNAL an announcement of the Directory and its address. Remember to look up the telephone number when you want a nurse.